THE HARVEST OF THE SEA.

The deep sea lies dreaming by the shore,
And up the rugged grassy steep
The fisher folk bring home once more
Their harvest gathered from the deep.
Like ripened plains at summer tide,
Their corn fields are the waters wide.

For wife and home and nestling child,
They travail on the trackless sea.
The smile that is at parting smiled
May be a life's last memory—
The accents of a farewell word
May be the latest ever heard.

When on the sea of life I sail,
With weary longings and regret,
If all my countless efforts fail
I must not fail to cast my net,
Waiting till One perchance comes nigh
To show me where the fishes lie.
—Arthur L. Salmon in Good Words.

THE FLOOD.

Wendling came to Fort Anne on the day that the Rev. Ezra Badgley and an unknown girl were buried. And that was a notable thing. The man had been found dead at his evening meal; the girl had died on the same day, and they were buried side by side. This caused much scandal, for the man was holy, and the girl, as many women said, was probably evil altogether. At the graves, when the minister's people saw what was being done, they piously protested, but the Factor answered them gravely that the matter should go on since none knew but the woman was as worthy of heaven as the man. Wendling chanced to stand beside pretty Pierre.

"Who knows!" he said aloud, looking hard at the graves, "who knows! She died before him, but the dead can strike."

Pierre did not answer immediately, for the Factor was calling the earth down on both coffins, but after a moment he added, "Yes, the dead can strike." And then the eyes of the two men caught and staid, and they knew that they had things to say to each other in the world.

They became friends. And that perhaps was not greatly to Wendling's credit, for in the eyes of many Pierre was an outcast as an outlaw. Maybe some of the women disliked this friendship most, since Wendling was a handsome man, and Pierre was never known to seek them, good or bad, and they blamed him for the other's coldness, for his unconcerned yet respectful eye.

"There's Nelly Nolan would dance after him to the world's end," said Shon McGann to Pierre one day, "and the Widdy Jerome herself, wid her flamin cheeks and the wild fun in her eye, croons like a babe at the breast as he slides out his cash on the bar, and over on Gansonby's flat there's"——

"There's many a fool," sharply interjected Pierre as he pushed the needle through a button he was sewing on.

"Bedad, there's a pair of fools here anyway, say I, for the women might die without lift at waist or brush of lip and neither of ye'd say, 'Here's to the joy of us, goddess, me own!'"

Pierre seemed to be intently watching the needle point as it pierced up the button eye, and his reply was given with a slowness corresponding to the sedate passage of the needle. "Wendling, you think, cares nothing for women? Well, men who are like that cared once for one woman, and when that was over—But, pshaw! I will not talk. You are no thinker, Shon McGann. You blunder through the world. And you'll tremble as much to a woman's thumb in fifty years as now."

"By the holy smoke," said Shon, "though I tremble at that, maybe I'll not tremble as Wendling at nothing at all." Here Pierre looked up sharply, then dropped his eyes on his work again. Shon lapsed suddenly into a moodiness.

"Yes," said Pierre, "as Wendling at nothing at all? Well?"

"Well, this, Pierre, for you that's a thinker, from me that's none. I was walkin with him in the Red glen yesterday. Suddenly he took to shiverin and snatched me by the arm, and a mad look shot out of his handsome face. 'Hush!' says he. I listened. There was a sound like the hard rattle of a creek over stones, and then another sound behind that. 'Come, quick,' says he, the sweat standin thick on him, and he ran me up the bank—for it was at the beginnin of the glen, where the sides were low—and there we stood pantin an starin flat at each other.

"'What's that, and what's got its hand on ye, for y'are cold as death an pinched in the face, an you've bruised my arm?' said I. And he looked around him slow and breathed hard, then drew his fingers through the sweat on his cheek. 'I'm not well, and I thought I heard—you heard it: what was it like?' said he, and he peered close at me. 'Like water,' said I; 'a little creek near, and a flood comin far off.' 'Yes, just that,' said he: 'it's some trick of wind in the glen, but it makes a man foolish, and an inch of brandy would be the right thing.' I didn't say no to that. And on we came, and brandy we had with a wish in the eye of Nelly Nolan that'd warm the heart of a tomb. And there's a cud for your chewin, Pierre."

During this Pierre had finished with the button. He had drawn on his coat and lifted his hat, and now lounged, trying the point of the needle with his forefinger. When Shon ended he said with a sidelong glance, "But what did you think of all that, Shon?"

"Think! There it was! What's the use of thinkin? There's many a trick in the world with wind or with spirit, as I've seen often enough in ould Ireland, and it's not to be guessed by me." Here his voice got a little lower and a trifle solemn. "For, Pierre," spoke he, "there's what's more than life or death, and sorra wan can tell what it is, but we'll know some day when"——

"When we've taken the leap at the almighty ditch," said Pierre, with a grave kind of lightness. "Yes, it is all strange. But even the almighty ditch is worth the doing—nearly everything is worth the doing: being young, growing old, fighting, loving—when youth is on—hating, eating, drinking, working, playing big games—all are worth it except two things."

"And what are they, bedad?"

"Thy neighbor's wife. Murder. Those are horrible. They are sure to double on a man one time or another, always."

Here, as in curiosity, Pierre pierced his finger with the needle and watched the blood form in a little globule. Looking at it meditatively and sardonically, he said: "There is only one end to these. Blood for blood is a great matter, and I used to wonder if it would not be terrible for a man to see his death advancing on him drop by drop, like that," and he let the spot of blood fall to the floor. "But now I know that there is a punishment worse than that. Mon Dieu! worse than that," he added.

Into Shon's face a strange look had suddenly come. "Yes, there's something worse than that, Pierre."

"So? bien?"

Shon made the sacred gesture of his creed. "To be punished by the dead And not see them—only hear them." And his eyes steadied firmly to the other's.

Pierre was about to reply, but there came the sound of footsteps through the open door and presently Wendling entered slowly. He was pale and worn, and his eyes looked out with a searching anxiousness. But that did not render him less comely. He was always dressed in black and white, and this now added to the easy and yet severe refinement of his person. His birth and breeding had occurred in places unfrequented by such as Shon and Pierre, but plains and wild life level all, and men are friends according to their taste and will, and by no other law. Hence these with Wendling.

He stretched out his hand to each without a word. The hand shake was unusual; he had little demonstration ever. Shon looked up surprised, but responded. Pierre followed, with a swift, inquiring look; then in the succeeding pause he offered cigarettes. Wendling took one, and all, silent, sat down. The sun streamed intemperately through the doorway, making a broad ribbon of light straight across the floor to Wendling's feet. After lighting his cigarette he looked into the sunlight for a moment, still not speaking.

Shon meanwhile started his pipe, and now, as if he found the silence awkward, "It's a day for God's country, this," he said; "to make man a Christian for little or much, though he play with the divil betunewhiles." Without looking at them, Wendling said in a low voice: "It was just such a day, down there in Quebec, when it happened. You could hear the swill of the river, and the water licking the piers, and the saws in the big mill and the little mill as they marched through the timber, flashing their teeth like bayonets.

"It is a wonderful sound on a hot, clear day—that wild, keen singing of the saws, like the cry of a live thing fighting and conquering. Up from the fresh cut lumber in the yards there came a smell like the juice of apples, and the sawdust, as you thrust your hand into it, was as cool and soft as the leaves of a clove flower in the dew. On these days the town was always still. It looked sleeping, and you saw the heat quivering up from the wooden walls and the roofs of cedar shingles as though the houses were breathing."

Here he paused, still intent on the shaking sun. Then he turned to the others as if suddenly aware that he had been talking to them. Shon was about to speak, but Pierre threw a restraining glance, and instead, they all looked through the doorway and beyond. In the settlement below they saw the effect that Wendling had described. The houses breathed. A grasshopper went clacking past, a dog at the door snapped up a fly, but there seemed no other life of day.

Wendling nodded his head toward the distance. "It was quiet, like that. I stood and watched the mills and the yards, and listened to the saws, and looked at the great slide, and the logs on the river; and I said to myself that it was all mine; all. Then I turned to a house on the hillock beyond the cedars, whose windows were open, with a cool dusk lying behind them. More than all else, I loved to think I owned that house and what was in it. She was a beautiful woman. And she used to sit in a room facing the mill—though the house fronted another way—thinking of me, I did not doubt, and working at some delicate needle stuff.

"There never had been a sharp word between us, save when I quarreled bitterly with her brother, and he left the mill and went away. But she got over that mostly, though the lad's name was never mentioned between us. That day I was so hungry for the sight of her that I got my fieldglass, used to watch my vessels and rafts making across the bay, and trained it on the window where I knew she sat. I thought it would amuse her, too, when I went back at night, if I told her what she had been doing. I laughed to myself at the thought of it as I adjusted the glass. I looked. There was no more laughing. I saw her, and in front of her a man, with his back half on me.

"I could not recognize him, though at the instant I thought he was something familiar. I failed to get his face at all. Hers I found indistinctly. But I saw him catch her playfully by the chin! After a little they rose. He put his arm about her and kissed her, and he ran his fingers through her hair. She had such fine golden hair, so light, and lifted to every breath. Something got into my brain. I know now it was the maggot which sent Othello mad. The world in that hour was malicious—awful.

"After a time—it seemed ages, she and everything had receded so far—I went home. At the door I asked the servant who had been there. She hesitated, confused, and then said the young curate of the parish. I was very cool, for madness is a strange thing; you see everything with an intense aching clearness—that is the trouble. She was more kind than common. I do not think I was unusual. I was playing a part well—my grandmother had Indian blood like yours, Pierre—and I was waiting. I was even nicely critical of her to myself. I balanced the mole on her neck against her general beauty; the curve of her instep, I decided, was a little too emphatic. I passed her back and forth before me, weighing her at every point; but yet these two things were the only imperfections.

"I pronounced her an exceeding piece of art—and infamy. I was hugely interested to see how she could appear perfect in her soul. I encouraged her to talk. I saw with devilish irony that an angel spoke. And to cap it all she assumed the fascinating air of the mediator—for her brother, seeking a reconciliation between us. Her amazing art of person and mind so worked upon me that it became unendurable, it was so exquisite and so shameless.

"I was sitting where the priest had sat that afternoon, and when she leaned toward me I caught her chin lightly and trailed my fingers through her hair as he had done, and that ended it, for I was cold and my heart worked with horrible slowness. Just as a wave poises at its height before breaking upon the shore it hung at every pulse beat, and then seemed to fall over with a sickening thud. I arose and, acting still, spoke impatiently of her brother. Tears sprang to her eyes. Such divine dissimilation! I thought—too good for earth. She turned to leave the room and I did not stay her. Yet we were together again that night. I was only waiting."

The cigarette had dropped from his fingers to the floor and lay there smoking. Shon's face was fixed with anxiety. Pierre's eyes played gravely with the sunshine. Wendling drew a heavy breath and then went on:

"Again next day it was like this—the world draining the heat. I watched from the big mill. I saw them again. He leaned over her chair and buried his face in her hair. The proof was absolute now. I started away, going roundabout, that I might not be seen. It took me some time. I was passing through a clump of cedar when I saw them making toward the trees skirting the river. Their backs were on me. Suddenly they diverted their steps toward the great slide, shut off from water this last few months, and used as a quarry to deepen it. Some petrified things had been found in the rocks, but I did not think they were going to these.

"I saw them climb down the rocky steps, and presently they were lost to view. The gates of the slide could be opened by machinery from the little mill. A terrible, deliciously malignant thought came to me. I remember how the sunlight crept away from me and left me in the dark. I stole through that darkness to the little mill. I went to the machinery for opening the gates. Very gently I set it in motion, facing the slide as I did so. I could see it through the open sides of the mill.

"I smiled to think what the tiny creek, always creeping through a faint leak in the gates and falling with a granite rattle on the stones, would now become. I pushed the lever harder, harder. I saw the gates suddenly give, then fly open, and the river sprang, roaring, massively, through them. I heard a shriek through the roar. I shuddered; and a horrible sickness came on me. And as I turned from the machinery, I saw the young priest coming at me through a doorway! It was not the priest and my wife that I had killed, but my wife and her brother."

He threw his head back as though something clamped his throat. His voice roughened with misery: "The young priest buried them both, and people did not know the truth. They were even sorry for me. But I gave up the mills—all; and I became homeless—this."

Now he looked up at the two men and said: "I have told you because you know something, and because there will, I think, be an end soon." He got up and reached out a trembling hand for a cigarette. Pierre gave him one. "Will you walk with me?" he asked.

Shon shook his head. "God forgive you!" he replied; "I can't do it."

But Wendling and Pierre left the hut together. They walked for an hour, scarcely speaking and not considering where they went. At last Pierre mechanically turned to go down into the Red glen. Wendling stopped short: then with a sighing laugh strode on. "Shon has told you what happened here?" he said.

Pierre nodded.

"And you know what came once when you walked with me. The dead can strike," he added.

Pierre sought his eye. "The minister and the girl buried together that day," he said, "were"——

He stopped, for behind him he heard the sharp, cold trickle of water. Silent they walked on. It followed them. They could not get out of the ravine now until they had compassed its length—the walls were high. The sound grew. The men faced each other. "Goodby," said Wendling, and he stretched out his hand swiftly. But Pierre heard a mighty flood groaning on them, and he blinded as he stretched out his arm in reply.

He caught at Wendling's shoulder, but felt him lifted and carried away, while himself stood still in a screeching wind and felt impalpable water rushing over him. In a minute it was gone and he stood alone in Red glen. He gathered himself up and ran. Far down, where the glen opened to the plain, he found Wendling. The hands were wrinkled; the face was cold; the body was wet; the man was drowned and dead.—Gilbert Parker in National Observer.

Moral—Fascinate Your Grocer.

Where there is love there is trust.—Ram's Horn.

Nothing makes home so bright, comfortable and healthful as a "Garland" stove or range.